grub. The hind limb is longer than the fore limb, and is terminated by a more perfect hand—the 'hallux' or thumb being stronger, and set at a more open angle with the other toes, and these being more similar to each other in length and thickness: the thumb has a flat, broad nail." Prof. Owen observed that, from the external characters of the Aye-aye, it might be inferred that it was of arboreal habits, the limbs being constructed chiefly for grasping, especially the hinder pair, as in all good climbers. The circular open eye, large iris, and wide pupil, reducible to a minute point when contracted, indicated a climber of nocturnal habits. The large and perfect ears bespoke the acuteness of their sense. The tail, long and bushy, but not prehensile, might add to the protective non-conducting covering of the well-clothed body during sleep. Prof. Owen then proceeded to describe the skeleton of the Aye-aye.

The reading of the conclusion of this paper was adjourned until the next meeting, to take place on the 28th instant.

January 28, 1862.

Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

Dr. P. L. Sclater stated that he had received under his care a second collection of specimens of natural history forwarded by Capt. J. H. Speke, Commander of the East-African Expedition, from his camp at Duthumi, October 22nd, 1860. The contents of the collection were as follows:—

1. Heads of the following Antelopes:—The Pallah (*Antilope melampus*); the Waterbuck (*Antilope ellipsiprymna*); the Brindled Gnu (*Catoblepas gorgon*); and the Reed Antelope (*Heleotragus reduncus*).
2. Head of a Wart-hog (*Phacochœrus æliani*).
3. Portions of the skin of a Monkey (*Cercopithecus*, sp.) in a bad state, not determinable.
4. Skins of birds:—

Ixos aurigaster, Vieill.	*Turtur delalandii*.
Coracias caudata.	*Peristera chalcospilos*.
Treron delalandii.	*Numida mitrata*.

5. Two skins of fishes—a species of *Clarias* and a fish belonging to the family *Characini*.

The following note was sent with them:—

"These were all shot in the countries of Uzaramo and Ukhutu, near the junction of the Kurgen with the Mgeta rivers.

"*Note*.—Great numbers and varieties of animals are to be found in these districts, as also to the northward and southward, where the

rivers escape from the hill-range facing the Sea of Zanzi. Birds and reptiles, especially snakes, are interesting and numerous.

(Signed) "J. H. S."

A letter was read from E. H. Rodd, Esq., dated Penzance, January 7th, announcing the recent occurrence in Cornwall of a female specimen of *Scolopax sabini* in very perfect plumage.

Professor Owen concluded the reading of his memoir on the Aye-aye (*Chiromys madagascariensis*), which had been adjourned from the last meeting of the Society. The portions of the structure of this animal successively examined were the dentition, the muscles, the brain, the digestive organs, the organs of circulation and respiration, and the renal and genital organs. The author then proceeded to the comparison of its external characters, its osteology, and its internal structure with those of the Lemurs and Rodents, and showed that in a variety of particulars its nearest approach was to members of the lemurine group. In ordinary zoological or external characters its nearest allies were certain Galagos of Africa (*Otolicnus crassicaudatus* and *O. alleni*). In conclusion, he entered into the evidence afforded by the peculiarities of this animal on the question of the origin of species, and, after showing the arguments in favour of the derivative hypothesis and those against its mode of operation, as propounded by Buffon, Lamarck, and Darwin, came to the conclusion that, whilst the general evidence on this subject was in favour of creation by law, he was compelled to acknowledge ignorance as to the mode in which such secondary causes might have operated in the origin of *Chiromys*. At the same time he fully admitted that the attempts to dissipate the mystery which environed the origin of species, whether successful or not, could not but be fraught with great collateral advantages to zoological science*.

The following papers were read:—

1. On the Skull of the Japanese Pig (Sus pliciceps). By Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S., &c.

I have lately had the opportunity of examining the skull of this animal, and now lay before the Society the reasons which induce me to believe that it is a distinct species—and a hitherto undescribed species—of the genus *Sus*, which has as yet only been observed in its domesticated state.

Some time ago, when Mr. Bartlett showed me the Japanese Pig which he had purchased, I was convinced of its belonging to a distinct species, and urged him to send an account of the animal, illustrated with a portrait of its very curious and characteristic face, to the 'Proceedings' of the Society.

The skulls of the domestic varieties of the common Pig, which are bred in Europe, differ but little from the skull of the European Wild Boar.

* This Memoir will be published in full in the Society's 'Transactions,' accompanied by appropriate illustrations.